Integrated Wasteland Development Programmes

1591. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:
SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed/monitored the Integrated Wasteland Development Programmes of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what remedial measures have been taken to meet the shortcomings in the implementation of the programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) and (b) Monitoring/ review of the progress of projects sanctioned under Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) is accorded very high priority and is being carried out in a systematic manner through:

- Periodic progress reports obtained from the Nodal Agencies/ Project Implementation Agencies (PIAs).
- Mid-term evaluation of the projects through independent evaluators.
- Visits to the States by Area Officers under the Area Officers' Scheme of the Ministry of Rural Development.
- Field visits by Programme Oficers of the Department of Land Resources.
- Review meetings/Video Conferencing with the State Governments.

(c) On the basis of the Evaluation Reports received from independent evaluators, mid-term corrective measures are taken in the specific projects. As per feedback received through Impact Assessment Studies of the projects, visits by the Area/Programme Officers from the Ministry of Rural Development, interactions with the officials of the State Governments, etc., the Guidelines for Watershed Development, applicable to IWDP among others, have also been revised in 2001, *inter-alia*, to provide for:-

(i) effective role of Panchayati Raj Institutions,

(ii) greater role for women,

(iii) greater role for Self Help Groups of the landless poor, especially those belonging to SC/ST, residing in project areas,

(iv) combination of Government Organisation (GO)/Non-Government Organisation (NGO) as Project Implementation Agencies,

(v) keep the project 'On Probation' for one year,

(vi) 'Exit Protocol' for the PIAs to ensure sustainability of the project.

The present monitoring mechanism is being further strengthened with the introduction of Supplementary Observation Mechanism w.e.f. 1.4.2002 by associating reputed Instutitions, such as Agricultural Universitities, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, 'Farmers' Training Centres, Non-Conventional Organisations, Research and Academic Institutions at State level and District level for monitoring of the projects right from the very beginning. These Institutions will provide timely and precise inputs regarding the pace and quality of the implementation of the projects on a permanent and dedicated basis.

Distribution of Waste and degraded forest land by States

1592. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made to encourage State Governments to distribute waste and degraded forest land among the landless poor; and

(b) the measures taken to identify excess lands in villages and towns for distribution among the poor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) and (b) The subject of Land is under the exclusive legislative and administrative jurisdiction of the States as provided under Entry No. 18 of List II (State List) of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The Central Government is playing only an advisory and co-ordinating role in this field. Almost all the States/UTs have enacted land ceiling laws. The issue relating to distribution of ceiling surplus land, Bhoodan land and Government Wastelands have been discussed at various for including Revenue Secretaries'/Ministers' Conferences. It has been emphasized in such Conferences that the lands which are free from all encumbrances should be distributed expeditiously